

beginning on the date of the enactment of this section and ending on September 30, 2002, executes a written agreement described in subsection (c) to accept a commission as an officer of the armed forces and remain on active duty for a period of not less than four years may, upon the acceptance of the agreement by the Secretary concerned, be paid an accession bonus in an amount determined by the Secretary concerned.

"(2) The amount of an accession bonus under paragraph (1) may not exceed \$30,000.

"(b) LIMITATION ON ELIGIBILITY FOR BONUS.—A person may not be paid a bonus under subsection (a) if—

"(1) the person, in exchange for an agreement to accept an appointment as an officer received financial assistance from the Department of Defense to pursue a course of study in dentistry; or

"(2) the Secretary concerned determines that the person is not qualified to become and remain certified and licensed as a dentist.

"(c) AGREEMENT.—The agreement referred to in subsection (a) shall provide that, consistent with the needs of the armed service concerned, the person executing the agreement will be assigned to duty for the period of obligated service covered by the agreement as an officer of the Dental Corps of the Army or the Navy or an officer of the Air Force designated as a dental officer.

"(d) REPAYMENT.—(1) An officer who receives a payment under subsection (a) and who fails to become and remain certified or licensed as a dentist during the period for which the payment is made shall refund to the United States an amount equal to the full amount of such payment.

"(2) An officer who voluntarily terminates service on active duty before the end of the period agreed to be served under subsection (a) shall refund to the United States an amount that bears the same ratio to the amount paid to the officer as the unserved part of such period bears to the total period agreed to be served.

"(3) An obligation to reimburse the United States imposed under paragraph (1) or (2) is for all purposes a debt owed to the United States.

"(4) A discharge in bankruptcy under title 11 that is entered less than five years after the termination of an

agreement under this section does not discharge the person signing such agreement from a debt arising under such agreement or this subsection. This paragraph applies to any case commenced under title 11 after the date of the enactment of this section.<sup>¶</sup>

(2) The table of sections at the beginning of such chapter is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 302a the following new item:

"302h. Special pay: accession bonus for dental officers."<sup>¶</sup>

(3) Section 303a of title 37, United States Code, is amended by striking out "302g" each place it appears and inserting in lieu thereof "302h".

(d) REPORT ON ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES TO INCREASE RECRUITMENT OF DENTISTS.—Not later than April 1, 1997, the Secretary of Defense shall submit to Congress a report describing the feasibility of increasing the number of persons enrolled in the Armed Forces Health Professions Scholarship and Financial Assistance program who are pursuing a course of study in dentistry in anticipation of service as an officer of the Dental Corps of the Army